'Govt trying to vitiate ties between MQM and PPP'

By Our Reporter

KARACHI, Jan 1: The Muttahida Qaumi Movement on Friday accused the government of implicating its activists in false cases of planning to eliminate former prime minister Benazir Bhutto in South Africa to sabotage the evolving working relationship between the MQM and PPP in the parliament.

Addressing a hurriedly called news conference at Karachi Press Club, deputy conveners of the MQM coordination committee accused the government of tarnishing the image of the MQM at home and abroad through media trial and the accusation of planning to kill Ms Bhutto was part of that conspiracy.

Senator Shaikh said the government was deliberately arresting activists and implicating them in false cases to make MQM politically ineffective because these activists were instrumental in organising these people.

He rejected the government claim that sectors in charge and other office-bearers arrested were criminals.

"They are elected through very tough method and are neat and clean people," said Senator Shaikh who alleged that during the past 24 hours 22 activists had been picked up from Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur. In this context, he referred to the arrest of Burns Road sector chief Shakir and other activists.

Senator Shaikh once again reiterated his party's reservations on military courts and said that six petitions were still pending in the Supreme Court.

It would have been better that implementation on its decisions was stayed until the Supreme Court gave its verdict. He was confident that the apex court would uphold the views against military courts.

Senator Shaikh said if this was not done now, there would be no way to save the life of those who were given capital punishment by these courts.

MQM MNA Kunwar Khalid Younus rejected government allegations that MQM was trying to incite sectarian frenzy by referring to the incident of setting on fire Ismaili Jamatkhana in Chitral.

He said the MQM had filed a motion on the issue which would come up in the National Assembly on Tuesday.

Senators Aftab Sheikh, Nasreen Jalil and MNA Kunwar Khalid Yunus said Aga Khan community played a significant role in Pakistan movement and extended a valuable contribution and the incident was condemnable, adds PPI.

They said it was the responsibility of the government to provide security to the citizens. They dispelled the impression that MQM was involved in creating religious bitterness and alleged that it was conspiracy being hatched by the government to ignite religious riots.

They said government must ascertain the facts and control the situation instead of hurling charges on a certain party or group.

Kunwar Khalid Yunus said the MQM had moved privilege motions in the National Assembly against induction of names of MQM MNAs in the Exit Control List (ECL) which is likely to come up for discussion on Monday.